United Nations S/PV.7213

Security Council

Sixty-ninth year

Provisional

7213th meeting

Tuesday, 8 July 2014, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Gasana	(Rwanda)
Members:	Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
	Australia	Ms. King
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Olguín
	China	Mr. Zhao Yong
	France	Mr. Araud
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Nigeria	Mr. Sarki
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Oh Joon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Tatham
	United States of America	Mr. Dunn

Agenda

Peace consolidation in West Africa

Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa (S/2014/442)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506. Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

14-45701 (E)

Accessible document Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the outgoing President

The President: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of July 2014, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Vitaly Churkin, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, for his service as President of the Council during the month of June. I am sure that I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Churkin and his team for the great diplomatic skill with which they conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Peace consolidation in West Africa

Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa (S/2014/442)

The President: In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Said Djinnit, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2014/442, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa.

I now give the floor to Mr. Djinnit.

Mr. Djinnit (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to present the thirteenth report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), covering the period from 1 January to 30 June 2014 (S/2014/442). Commendable efforts continued during that period to promote development and economic growth and to strengthen peace and democracy at the national and regional levels.

On the economic front, with an average of 7 per cent, West Africa continues to record the highest growth on the continent. Moreover, since the last quarter of 2013, following the remarkable progress seen in the stabilization process of Mali and Guinea-Bissau, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has refocused its efforts on promoting the socioeconomic development and integration of the region by underscoring infrastructure, energy and agriculture.

However, the countries of West Africa continue to experience great difficulties in responding to expectations in the social sphere. The encouraging economic growth figures have not necessarily had an impact on the living conditions of the people, who have not always benefited from the dividends of economic progress. There have therefore been delays in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. While progress has been made in reducing extreme poverty in the countries of the region as a whole, the results in terms of access to primary education and reducing hunger have been mixed at best. Women and young people are still the most vulnerable groups and the most severely affected by States' inadequate responses to the many social challenges. Moreover, in some countries, increased insecurity has resulted in resources being redirected to security priorities, to the detriment of development.

With regard to the security situation in particular, ECOWAS and its leaders have continued to play a leading role in resolving crises in the region. Thanks to the commitment of its member States, ECOWAS's efforts in Guinea-Bissau, including the deployment of a stabilization mission, have enabled the transition process to succeed. I commend its successful conclusion and the election of new and legitimate authorities in Guinea-Bissau, which has opened a new chapter in the troubled history of the country, which is working towards a State based on the rule of law and enjoying stable democratic institutions. The crisis in Mali, on the other hand, revealed the limits of the region and the continent in responding rapidly to crisis. ECOWAS and the African Union have learned from that experience and are now working to establish mechanisms adequate to a rapid response to such crises. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the resumption of the dialogue process among the parties in Mali, which is the path that can lead to the lasting peace so fervently desired for this important African country.

(*spoke in English*)

While the region has been working to promote development and consolidate democracy, it also continues to face the daunting scourge of transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking, piracy

and criminality at sea, as well as increasing terrorist activity. We at the United Nations Office for West Africa have been devoting considerable energy to sensitizing regional leaders to the need for decisive concerted efforts to fight those serious threats to regional security and stability. The potential for organized criminal networks in the region to recruit unemployed young people is very worrying. It is essential that the countries of West Africa close ranks and establish effective strategic and operational cooperation mechanisms to address the threat, which runs the risk of destabilizing the entire Sahelo-Saharan region, from the Atlantic to the Indian Oceans. Their efforts should be strongly backed by the rest of the international community and the United Nations.

The region is embarking on a new electoral cycle similar to what was experienced between 2008 and 2010. No fewer than five crucial elections will be held in 2015, in Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Guinea, the Niger and Nigeria. The societies they will be held in are often highly polarized, with deep political divides and controversies related to ongoing or potential initiatives aimed at amending constitutional provisions on presidential term limits. The United Nations Office for West Africa will continue to work closely with ECOWAS and other stakeholders to help in efforts to prevent political differences from developing into violent crises and to provide electoral assistance aimed at consolidating democracy in the region. In view of the fragility prevailing there, every effort should be made to ensure that democracy and stability are pursued with equal commitment, since they are mutually reinforcing.

The Office has been supporting integrated regional initiatives in West Africa, owing to the fact that the crises occurring there are increasingly regional in nature. In that regard, we have continued to support the implementation of the cross-border security strategy for the Mano River Union, which we helped develop. In working closely with ECOWAS and the Union in implementing that initiative, we are guided by our strong belief that the Mano River Union has the potential to become a beacon of prosperity and stability in West Africa.

As outlined in the Secretary-General's report, piracy and criminality at sea in the Gulf of Guinea poses another significant challenge to stability, peace, security and economic development in the region. In that regard, the continued support of the United Nations, through UNOWA and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, to ECOWAS, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Commission of the Gulf of Guinea in their implementation of the strategic framework adopted at the Yaoundé Summit of 25 June 2013 will remain critical in addressing this serious problem.

The situation in the Sahel remains alarming, due to a combination of various vulnerabilities related to governance, security, the environment and socioeconomic development. In the wake of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, several initiatives have emerged, highlighting the need for coordination and complementarity of effort so that all external actors can work together to help the Sahel.

In the context of the growing insecurity in the Sahel, the situation in Nigeria remains very worrying. Despite the Nigerian Government's efforts, the schoolgirls abducted from Chibok remain in captivity. I would like to commend the countries that are supporting Nigeria's efforts to locate the girls and obtain their safe release. In the meantime, the level of violence against civilians in Nigeria continues to escalate. That has resulted in significant displacement in the north. It is disheartening to note that within the last two weeks there have been at least 18 attacks attributed to Boko Haram, which have resulted in innocent civilians' tragic deaths and in people's displacement. The Boko Haram crisis is now affecting security in the subregion. As the Chairman of the Cameroon-Nigeria Commission, I am particularly disturbed by the adverse effects that the insecurity has had on the border demarcation process, which would otherwise have been close to completion.

With the growing insecurity in Nigeria's north-east, coupled with increasing political tensions and divisions in the run-up to the 2015 general election, the country is at a crossroads. In my view, therefore, it is critical that Council members continue to lend their support to efforts and initiatives aimed at preserving stability in Nigeria, which in the past few decades has played a prominent role in maintaining regional and global peace and security. The present situation also underscores how vital it is that the Nigerian political class take a unified stand in confronting the persistent insecurity in the country.

During my forthcoming visit to Nigeria, as the high-level Representative of the Secretary-General, I and the United Nations country team will review the implementation status of the integrated support package adopted by the United Nations in consultation

with the Nigerian authorities, aimed at complementing the efforts to address the Chibok abduction and its related challenges. I will also continue to encourage the countries of the Lake Chad Basin to cooperate and work together as they have undertaken to do within the framework of the implementation of the decisions reached at the Paris Summit and the follow-up ministerial meeting in London. In that regard, I welcome the African Union's decision to consider the possibility of deploying a task force in the region to address the challenge posed by Boko Haram activities, building on the initial steps taken by the countries of the region.

I would like to draw the Council's attention to the fact that West Africa is currently struggling to respond to a deadly pandemic caused by the Ebola virus. The outbreak identified in February in the south-eastern region of Guinea has rapidly spread to Liberia and Sierra Leone. While significant progress in efforts to contain the outbreak of the disease has been recorded, a relapse has been noted in the past few weeks, with the risk of further spread within the region. The World Health Organization reports that since February there have been at least 759 infections and 467 deaths related to the disease. It is important that the international community pay due attention and provide support during this epidemic, which is one of many other challenges to stability in the region.

Finally, I wish to thank the Council for its continued interest in and support to the efforts aimed at consolidating peace, security and democracy in the West Africa region.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Djinnit for his briefing.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meting rose at 10.20 a.m.